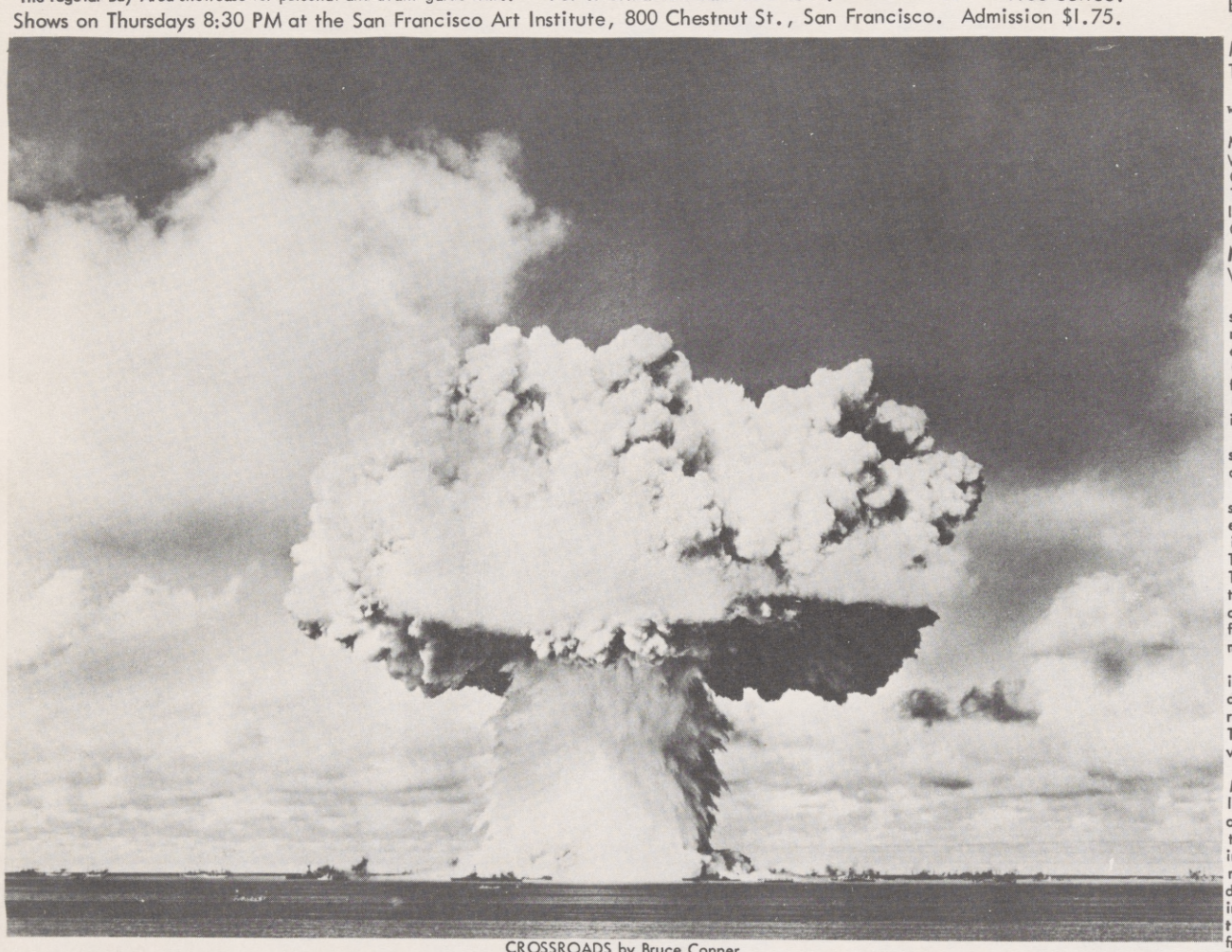
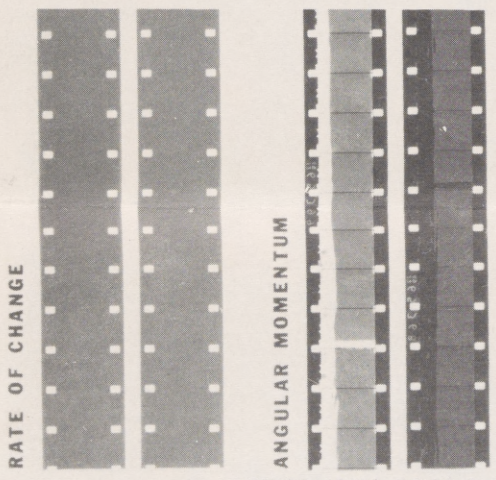
CANYON CINEMATHEQUE

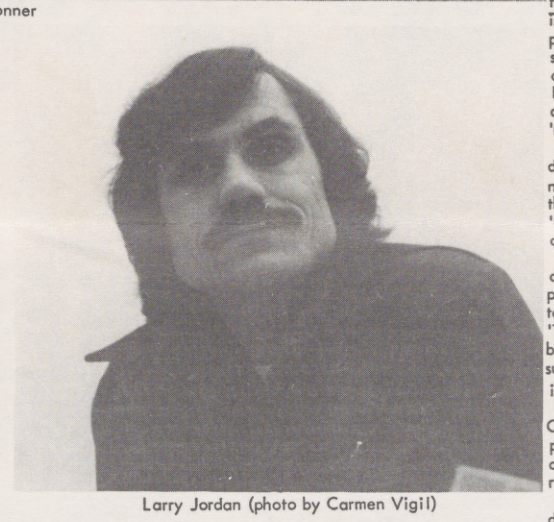
The regular Bay Area showcase for personal and avant-garde films. For information call 332-1514. '76 Free coffee.
Shows on Thursdays 8:30 PM at the San Francisco Art Institute, 800 Chestnut St., San Francisco. Admission $1.75.



CROSSROADS by Bruce Conner

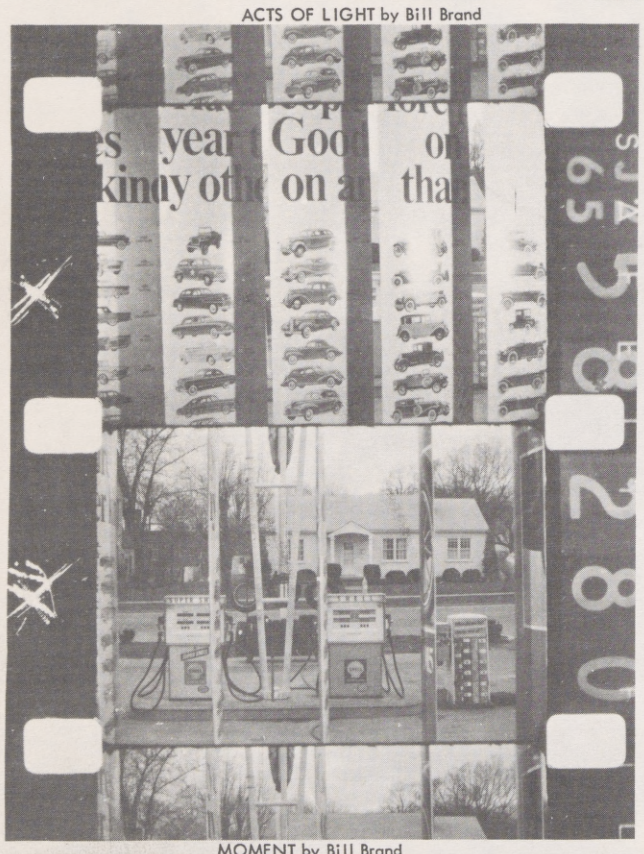


ACTS OF LIGHT by Bill Brand



Larry Jordan (photo by Carmen Vigil)

To receive our posters in the mail, send your name, address, and zip code to: Cinematheque Mailing List/Canyon Co-op Office/Industrial Center Building, Room 220/Sausalito, CA 94965.



MOMENT by Bill Brand

NOT A PRETTY PICTURE by Martha Coolidge

MARCH 4: TOM DeWITT

WITH TOM DeWITT IN PERSON

Tom DeWitt was born in NYC in 1944. He apprenticed under Stan Vanderbeek in 1965. In 1966 he came to the Bay Area to complete his B.A. at San Francisco State College. His studies quickly branched from film to multi-media "light shows" and ultimately incorporated video. His collaborative efforts with Scott Bartlett eventuated in the film OFF ON. Upon his return to New York in 1969, he completed THE LEAP and was invited to exhibit his work on the CBS program CAMERA THREE. In lieu of payment for his program, he was given four hours of free time in Walter Cronkite's control room. The material prepared there was incorporated into FALL. The completed film was aired on a second CAMERA THREE program. The soundtrack for FALL was composed at the Electronic Music Studios of the State University of N.Y. at Albany, an advanced synthesis facility directed by composer Joel Chadabe. Recognizing the potential of the studio for graphics, Tom began research in video and computer graphics in 1971. He is currently designing a video synthesizer under a grant from the NEA. Tom has also dabbled in dramatics, and his pantomime character Zierot, born in a Brooklyn College television studio in 1972, will soon make his film debut in OUTTA SPACE, a film funded by the AFI.

1. LECTURE VIDEOGRAPHIC (15 min.)
   An illustrated discussion on experimental film which introduces:
2. ATMOSPHERE (1966 6 min.)
   The city scene, seen and unseen, real and abstract, the fact without the figure and the figure without the fact.
3. THE LEAP (1968 8 min.)
   The break with the confines of the past by a release of inner energy. Sound by Man Meyer.
4. A spoken introduction to the iconography of FALL.
5. FALL (1971 16 min.)
   The myth of Icaris retold with an eye to the bomber boys ever-ready for a nuclear alert.
6. A statement on videoart
7. KINESCOPES (1974 20 min.)
   Filmed selections from CATHODE RAY THEATER including: ZIEROT and STUDIES FOR PHILHARMONIA. Sound by Laurie Spiegel.
8. Rap up

MARCH 11 'NOT A PRETTY PICTURE" by MARTHA COOLIDGE

SAN FRANCISCO PREMIERE (1975 83 min.)

NOT A PRETTY PICTURE is a film about the making of a film. The film is about rape; more specifically, Martha Coolidge's rape. In making NOT A PRETTY PICTURE, Martha Coolidge assembled a group of actors to improvise the roles of all those who were connected with the circumstances leading up to, during, and after the event which occurred when she was a 16-year-old boarding school student.

During the rehearsals, there occurred much discussion as to how the actors would play their various roles, and, as it turned out, the rehearsals were even more interesting than the actual scenes. This discussion, around which the final film is centered, reveal a great deal about adolescent sexuality and the forces which motivate both male and female. Martha Coolidge herself appears in this discussion; the most intense moments occur when she is both participant and spectator as her rape is re-enacted.

"The young actors alternate brilliantly between acting their roles (finding disturbing personal connections with the characters they're playing) and cool, rational discussion with Ms. Coolidge. The film is equally appealing to men and women: it's a devastating portrait of how people are trapped into role playing, and how this shapes their lives. NOT A PRETTY PICTURE is, in addition, warm, funny, and very moving." --Michael Webb, AFI

MARCH 18: LARRY JORDAN RETROSPECTIVE PART THREE

WITH LARRY JORDAN IN PERSON

(In conjunction with the SF Museum of Modern Art and the Pacific Film Archive)

This is the third and final evening of films selected by Mr. Jordan to best cover the entire range of his film production over the past two decades.

Larry Jordan as a Bay Area film-maker stands unique as a film artist as his methods are as diverse as collage animation and narrative drama. Though his methods are varied there is a singular presence in his mythic and lyrical vision. This program, selected by Mr. Jordan himself, includes films from the very first to the very latest, a period of nearly twenty years. Our program will include the following:

THE ONE ROMANTIC ADVENTURE OF EDWARD
ORB
PINK SWINE
TRIPTYCH IN FOUR PARTS
BIG SUR: THE LADIES
OUR LADY OF THE SPHERES
MINERVA LOOKS OUT INTO THE ZODIAC
THE APPARITION

Larry Jordan will be available after the show to talk informally with any individuals who have questions.

The first part of this retrospective will be shown at the S.F. Museum of Modern Art on Tuesday, March 16 and will include: MORNINGAME, WATERLIGHT, JEWEL FACE, HAMFAT ASAR, PLAIN SONG, DUO CONCERTANTES, EIN TRAUM DER LIEBENDEN, and OLD HOUSE PASSING. The second part will be shown at the Pacific Film Archive on Wednesday, March 17, and will include: MAN IS IN PAIN, THE SACRED ART OF TIBET, GYMNOPEDIES, ONCE UPON A TIME, and HILDUR AND THE MAGICIAN.

MARCH 25: BILL BRAND

WITH BILL BRAND IN PERSON

Since his appearance at the London Film Festival in 1973 and his one-man show at Millenium in NYC that same year, Bill Brand has become increasingly regarded as one of the more important younger film-makers. Although his early education was in math and the sciences, he became an art major at Antioch College where he also studied film-making with Paul Sharits. He later taught film-making at Antioch, The Art Institute of Chicago, S.U.N.Y. at Binghampton, and is currently on the film faculty at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, N.Y.

Bill Brand may (at least formalistically) be considered among the so-called structuralist film-makers but from them his work constitutes a most interesting departure.

"Within the shared paradigm of film as research-in-progress, Brand's work is still close to that of Sharits: it is conceptually rigorous, minimalist; epistemological and literal; systematic and heuristic. It is also self-consciously innovatory, ...being constructed around a technical or conceptual neologism. Thus MOMENT employs natural images and sound within a strict serial form; TOUCH TONE PHONE FILM incorporates the representation of 'film slip' in the projector as its only in-frame movement; while RATE OF CHANGE and and ANGULAR MOMENTUM are both made without the camera, the former a frameless tinted strip ordered direct from the lab, and the latter combining manual and optical printer procedures.

"But however important these innovations may be in defining the locus of the individual film, they are not ends in themselves. All four films seem precisely designed to compel the viewer to frame a series of hypotheses as to the internal relationship of the film's elements and their place within its over-all structure. The conceptual structures may be essentially 'simple', but in the context of viewing they become problematic.

"Acutely so, in the case of the earliest and most complex of the films, MOMENT. Brand describes MOMENT as 'a demonstration-exploration of the line between human information and machine information: a dynamic revelation of film's basic unit, the frame.' Formally, it consists of seven permutations of a two-and-a-half-minute synch-sound shot, each of which renders the natural image and sound increasingly incoherent until, finally, coherence is miraculously restored. What we have actually witnessed is the progressive decomposition of the original material down to its ultimate constituent as information, by means of reversing its 'direction' in decreasing lengths; so that the final restoration is, in fact, the opening shot running backwards frame by frame. But of course the viewer cannot detect this 'reversal', since the frame is the basic unit of the film system,and all reproducing media, in order to present an illusion of continuous time/space, rely on a basic unit of information shorter than the 'moment', i.e. the shortest duration at which no distinction can be made between units of information. Just as, in language, the individual letter or phoneme only posseses 'meaning' by virtue of its location in the alphabet or articulatory system, so the single frame has no unequivocal 'meaning' (direction) when detached from the material 'syntax' of the filmstrip."

In RATE OF CHANGE "...a succession of faint, full-frame colour fields dissolve imperceptably into one another. The film has neither discernible image nor chromatic sequence; its visual 'rate of change' appears random. By contrast, the sound-track gives an impression of systematic organization: its two-tone 'fog-horn' motif repeats regularly as the tones vary in interval through consonance and dissonance.

"...Brand enigmatically describes RATE OF CHANGE as 'an acceleration of colour perception, a colour correction', which might suggest that it seeks primarily to extend the viewer's capacity for sensory discrimination. But a clue to its conceptual aim (and origin?) is provided by Hollis Frampton: 'The illusion of movement is certainly an accustomed adjunct of the film image, but that illusion rests upon the assumption that the rate of change between successive frames may vary only within rather narrow limits. There is nothing in the structural logic of the filmstrip that can justify such an assumption.'

"By its suppression of any conventional developmental articulation, RATE OF CHANGE effectively reveals the basic modality of the film experience: temporal process. The spectator is finally driven, through esthetic frustration, to contemplate the film's intrinsic subject, its homogeneous 'time-shape' in relation to his own heterogeneous temporal consciousness.

"If MOMENT and RATE OF CHANGE can be seen as Brand's avowedly didactic films, his 1973 work appears to take a more subjective direction. TOUCH TONE PHONE FILM is...a rapid montage of still-shots of assorted telephones, each with its own ringing tone, followed by a simulated vertical 'blur', to converge on successive frames of a woman moving to answer the call. When she eventually 'reaches' the phone, the film ends. Thus the film's form mimics the hiatus of machine-human interface---'the slipping time between the dialled number and the hello at the other end' (Brand). Apart from its links with the sequential analysis of film material begun in MOMENT, TOUCH TONE PHONE FILM impresses primarily as a wittily anecdotal metaphor.

"ANGULAR MOMENTUM signals an ambitious return to abstraction. Described by the film-maker as 'further studies in continuous colour motion', its strategy immediately recalls that of RATE OF CHANGE: a chromatic visual sequence accompanied by concrete soundtrack....This was initially made by scraping the emulsion from a length of exposed film ('image as absence of emulsion'), which then served as a'stencil' for the addition of colour to both parts of the strip in printing ('strictly speaking colour as selective absence of emulsion'). The resulting sequence runs from a pink/black contrast, through a wide gamut of combinations, to a final reversal of the opening field/strip colours; while the soundtrack modulates steadily from a wall of 'white noise' to a pure sine-wave." Ian Christie, Studio International

MOMENT (1972 25 min.)
TOUCH TONE PHONE FILM (1972 8 min.)
RATE OF CHANGE (1972 18 min.)
ANGULAR MOMENTUM (1973 20 min.)
plus a selection of films called CARTOONS

APRIL 1: BRUCE CONNER

TWO NEW FILMS

Bruce Conner once gained admittance into West Berlin by saying Heil Hitler to the officials when they refused to let him off the plane. That is a typical Bruce Conner story. Bruce Conner is a man of courage and integrity and always seems to put it over with a deep sense of humor. Humor in the face of danger seems to be a factor running through the life and work of this man who will stop at nothing to get the desired laugh. A laugh which will suddenly clear the air around some irritation in the fabric of contemporary American culture. Vide the proliferation of all those repeated images of the assassination of J.F.K. in REPORT, which make us feel the event deeply but in the end leave us with a true sense of the absurd. This is something that is very funny, but this is the kind of funny one does not have to laugh out loud to in order to feel moved by it.

A MOVIE (1958 12 min.)
"The first movie ever made, inspiration for a thousand stories never told."--B.C.

REPORT (1963-67 13 min.)
"Assassination of Kennedy and Oswald from the archives of the Texas Bookstore Depository. (The building advertises Hertz Rent-A-Car, 'Let Hertz put you in the driver's seat.') A radio/picture documentary." --B.C.

PERMIAN STRATA (1969 4 min.)
"Ancient sea creatures become stone exposed at quarry in southeast Kansas. The philosophy of evolution." --B.C.

THE WHITE ROSE (1965-67 7 min.)
"The painting started by Jay DeFeo in 1957 was removed from her studio in 1965 by hosts of Bekins Angels. Now it rests immobilized behind plaster, a monolith in the conference room of the SFAI." --B.C.

TAKE THE 5:10 TO DREAMLAND (1975 5 min. & 10 sec.)
"Music by Patrick Gleeson. Clips from documentaries, education and science films of the 30's, 40's, and 50's. Dream by Bruce Conner." --B.C.

CROSSROADS (1975 36 min.)
"Music by Patrick Gleeson and Terry Riley. Film from the National Archives. Grant from AFI. Bomb by the USA: OPERATION CROSSROADS exploded the first underwater Atomic Bomb at Bikini on July 25, 1946 with the bomb suspended 50 feet below one of the 90 Japanese and American ships moored in the lagoon. 500 Cameras recorded the event from the air, the ground and from the ships." --B.C.